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ABSTRACT

This report of a New York City Technical College (NYCTC) task force focuses on a diminished sense of campus and institutional community. Three committees were formed to explore the problem. The committees' findings are reported in an early section. The Research Committee found a lack of studies on college community and recommended some models for community and identified five elements to establishing effective communities. The Questionnaire Committee designed two questionnaires: one for faculty and staff and one for students. Questionnaire data indicated rates of use of various facilities, frequent complaints, ratings of services, and suggestions for events. The Open Hearings Committee offered a number of recommendations for change and uncovered some campus-wide dissatisfaction with respect to relations between community members. Overall the report finds that NYCTC is two communities: a "ministrative" (caring, serving, as well as administrative) community existing to serve the college and each other, and a collegial community marked by a strong desire for belonging and commitment to the college. The report urges that efforts to anchor these two aspects of community be rooted in purpose, respect, communication, and celebration. The report closes with a detailed list of 24 practical suggestions for change in both ministrative and collegial communities. An appendix contains correspondence, committee reports, and questionnaire data reports. (JB)

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ED 363 151

Anchors for Community

A Report to the President and the College

HE026756

The Task Force on Community Enhancement
New York City Technical College
The City University of New York
July 6, 1993

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Anchors for Community

A Hope and a Challenge

We live in a time when traditional notions of community are being stretched, broken, and reconfigured. The media, with their penchant for rapidly changing images, rapid modes of transportation, with their ability to dine us in New York, breakfast us in Rome, and lunch us in Tokyo, all the varieties of the modern, seem to conspire to separate us from the stability we feel is community.

Our college is no exception to these forces. Old-fashioned notions of college, a tranquil resting place for the mind and body, a shared community of learning and interest, seem to have little place here at New York City Technical College located in Downtown Brooklyn. We occupy buildings in a large urban center. We all commute to work. Many of us (perhaps most of our students) work and go to school and take care of families. We are not a traditional college, and it is reasonable to assume that we must talk about a sense of community at our college in ways that reflect what we are. To model our hopes on a traditional rural college would be folly.

Common sense also argues that there are forces that oppose any change, that some reports are not constructed to enhance change but to diffuse the energies for change. From the beginning, members of this Task Force have voiced concerns about the nature of our work. What guarantees do we have that anything we recommend will get done? Aren't good suggestions about enhancing community being made all the time, and don't most go unheeded?

We have no guarantees, nor can there be any, except our honest desires and good will to enhance community at our college. President Merideth's action to set up this Task Force suggests his good will to foster community by following our recommendations. It is our profound hope that he do so. Indeed we challenge the President to espouse the recommendations that he deems important and to publish a timetable of how and when they will be achieved. We also challenge him to make clear why he chooses not to implement the others. Enhancing our sense of community at the college will take work by all of us over time. If we take the work seriously, then this Task Force report will have served its rightful purpose.

Background

The Task Force on Community Enhancement was created by President Merideth in the spring of 1991. It grew out of discussions at the college concerning feelings of a diminished sense of community. At the first meeting of the Task Force on June 7, 1991, President Merideth charged the group, composed of members from all elements of the college community: 1) to survey the college's sense of community, 2) to recommend ways and means to enhance community at the college, and 3) to submit a written report describing

the Task Force's work and presenting the Task Force's recommendations.

To carry out the Task Force's mission, three committees were formed: the Research Committee, chaired by Francine Campone and, later, Dennis Bakewicz, the Questionnaire Committee, chaired by Nathan Vaisman, and the Open Hearings Committee, chaired by Charles Jones. The Research Committee was charged to review research on community and to construct a possible community model for New York City Technical College. The Questionnaire Committee was charged to construct and distribute questionnaires measuring community at the college, to collect and analyze the returned questionnaires, and to present a report of these findings to the Task Force. Finally, the Open Hearings Committee was charged to organize public hearings, to collect and summarize statements and suggestions, and to report its findings to the Task Force.

Over the past two years the committees have been at work. Questionnaires have been constructed, distributed, and tabulated; discussions about the nature of our community and research into community models have been carried out; and open hearings have been conducted and recorded. In the meantime, the Task Force chair has kept the college community and the president informed about Task Force progress in a report to the Strategic Planning Committee, "Improving Our Community" (March 1992) and an article in Perspectives, "Community and Community Enhancement" (Spring 1992). In addition, The New Tech Times published a letter by the chair (October 1992), urging student involvement in the Open Hearing process, a report supporting the Task Force's work (November 1992), as well as letters from students suggesting ways of enhancing community (February 1993), and a report on the open hearings in the Voorhees and Namm buildings conducted by the Open Hearings Committee (May 1993).

On May 7, 1993 the Task Force met to discuss its report to the president. Committees presented their final reports, and they were discussed, along with how the final report should be written and structured. It was agreed that the chair would write the report and that final committee reports, along with copies of the questionnaires, would be appended to the report. (See the Appendix.)

Committee Findings

The Research Committee

The findings of the Research Committee suggest both the novelty and the difficulty of Task force work. Although discussions of various concepts related to community enhancement, such as social structure, culture, leadership, polity, family, abound in the literatures of higher education, sociology, anthropology, business management, leadership studies, philosophy, religion etc., to their knowledge, the Research Committee reported, no specific scholarly work has been carried out concerning particular college communities, nor is there any specific work on models of ideal college communities. Discussions of college communities tend to focus on descriptions of elements--the administration, the faculty, the students--and their problems and not on the whole.

One reason for the lack of such studies and models is the individual nature of college campuses. Take, for example, our institution. Surely, although we share many attributes

with the other members of CUNY, we are also unique in many others--unique programs, for instance. Another reason is the complex nature of each campus. A quick look at the college's administrative structure makes this clear.

In what sense can we talk about a totalizing concept--community--at New York City Technical College? was a question the Research Committee often raised. Isn't it more accurate to say that the college is made up of many communities? And isn't it also accurate to say that many people have little allegiance to the college, their attitude being that it is simply a place to transact work or gather credits for a degree? Aren't the desires of many to minimize their interactions at the college and to maximize their community time elsewhere, in their homes and their local communities? In what sense can a commuter school, composed mainly of nontraditional students divided among various divisions and departments, spending their lives mostly, perhaps, in one building, or even one or a few floors in one building, be called a college community? Moreover, does it really matter whether people feel part of a college community or not, if they are satisfied with their transactions with the college?

Clearly such questions negate any simple thinking about a community model for our college. Perhaps we have to talk about varying communities within the college or ranges of desire for community within the college, and community enhancement somehow means increasing satisfaction across a wide range of variables.

The Research Committee recommendations approach the problems of creating a model for community at our college in two ways: first, they suggest that we should use as our measures for enhancing community at the college the six principles that Ernest Boyer recommends should guide decision makers in establishing a stronger sense of community on college campuses: 1) college communities should be educationally purposeful, with faculty and students sharing common academic goals and working to strengthen teaching and learning; 2) college communities should be open, with freedom of expression protected and civility affirmed; 3) college communities should be just; 4) college communities should be disciplined; 5) college communities should be caring; and 6) college communities should celebrate both tradition and change. Of the six principles, three were of most concern to the Research Committee for stress on our campus: the need for a more academically purposeful community, the need for a more disciplined community, and the need for a more celebratory community.

Second, they identify exemplary communities at the college and note why they are successful. Five elements were found to be keys to establishing such communities: 1) an involved faculty adviser, 2) opportunities to work or travel together, 3) a strong organizational image, 4) a welcoming physical environment, and 5) aggressive marketing.

The Questionnaire Committee

The Questionnaire Committee designed two questionnaires. One was distributed to the faculty and staff in early 1992; the other was distributed to students in early 1993. Two hundred and sixty faculty and staff responded to the first questionnaire and one thousand to the second.

Faculty and Staff Survey

The Faculty and Staff Survey results indicate that roughly two thirds of the respondents rarely or never use the cafeteria and that the respondents rate its service on the whole from average to fair (question 2). Building services are generally rated poor by more than half of the respondents, and on the average they are rated excellent by less than 4% of the respondents (question 4).

To the questions about working at City Tech (questions 5-8), the results indicate that 62% of the respondents agreed somewhat or strongly that their opinions and concerns are respected and heeded by superiors, and 35% disagreed somewhat or strongly. Concerning opportunities for advancement, 46% of the respondents disagreed strongly that there were opportunities, and another 23% disagreed somewhat. On the other hand, a good sense of community in the office where people work was reported by 60% of the respondents who agreed somewhat or strongly as compared to 37% who disagreed strongly or somewhat. Finally, 70% of the respondents disagreed somewhat or strongly that adequate avenues for conflict resolution exist as compared to 19% who agreed somewhat or strongly. Most striking in this category of responses was the small number of responses per item. Indeed, for three of the four questions less than 30% of the overall respondents answered.

The results of the questions focused on the impact of the budget crisis at the college (question 9) note an overwhelming (over 80%) sense of great impact on morale, job security, employee benefits, availability of classes, class size, and resources. No one saw **no** impact.

On the question dealing with policies designed to protect rights, health, and welfare and discovering if respondents felt they were victims of violations of policy (question 10), in general about 50% of the overall respondents indicated they were aware of policies--with the exceptions of disability and rehabilitation policies--and few felt that they had been victims of violations of policy. Generally, no more than 5% said that they had been somewhat or very much victims of policy violations, with the exception of the Disabilities and Rehabilitation Acts policies, in which violations were reported between 6% and 11%.

Participation in college events (question 11), given the overall number of respondents, appears to be minimal. On the average only about 7% of the total respondents participated in any single event, with a low percentage of less that 2% and a high of 15%.

Finally, here is a list of the most frequent comments that were added to the end of the questionnaire:

1. Poor ventilation in the college
2. The No Smoking rule is not enforced
3. More funds for educational materials needed--supplies, maintenance of existing equipment
4. Poor working of the elevators in Voorhees Hall
5. Smaller classes
6. Reasonable registration process--reorganization needed

Student Questionnaire

The Student Questionnaire was distributed at random during the spring registration at

the beginning of 1993. One thousand questionnaires were collected; about 400 were filled out extensively.

Of the 429 students who answered the cafeteria use question (question 2), 33% said they used the cafeteria more than once a week and 12%, once a week, whereas 27% said they used it rarely and 28% never. Positive ratings of the cafeteria were roughly balanced with negative ones, if the categories of excellent and average are added up and compared to the pair fair or poor, with the exception of the price category where two thirds of the respondents rated prices fair to poor. Student responses were similar to faculty and staff ones across the board, but the faculty and staff tend to approve about 10% more.

Students are far more positive than faculty and staff regarding building ratings (question 4). On the average roughly 60% of the students who had opinions rated their buildings average to excellent as compared to less than 20% of the faculty and staff.

On the whole, with the exception of academic advisement, students with opinions felt more than 50% of the time that registration steps were fair to poor (question 5). Suggestions that follow this question stress the need to make the process more efficient. They range from increasing help to students, to registering in departments, to carrying on mail registration.

Academic services are relatively highly rated by students (question 7). More than 75% on the average agree strongly or somewhat with all the statements, and less than 7% on the average disagree strongly.

Apparently many students feel that their rights, their health, and their welfare are not protected adequately (question 8). If responses marked very much or somewhat are tallied as percentages of those who respond they are aware of college policies, on the average more than 100% report that they believe that they have been a victim of violations of policy--the highest numbers being those associated with the Disabilities and Rehabilitation Acts. Student responses diverge enormously from those of faculty and staff where violations at worst were approximately 11%. **No Opinion** percentages were also much higher for students than for faculty and staff.

Over the course of the year, students participated in college events (question 9) slightly less than faculty and staff--5% versus 7% on the average, but the range of participation was similar--from 2% to 15% (assuming 400 respondents).

Use of college services and facilities (question 11) ranges from a high of 48% for the Library (assuming 400 respondents) to a low of 7% for team sports. Roughly a quarter of the students use the Learning Center and a third the Bookstore.

Suggested new events on campus (question 10) include a Caribbean Festival, a Dominican Heritage Month, a Dr. Martin Luther King celebration, a student talent month, and a street festival. Suggested new services (question 12) include better communication, clubs for evening students, longer hours for the learning centers, and musical performers on campus.

The Open Hearings Committee

Open hearings to which all members of the college community were invited were conducted in the spring of 1993 at Voorhees and Namm Halls. Approximately 100 people

attended and 30 testified. The Open Hearings Committee's most significant finding was that increased respect and responsibility are required elements for enhancing community at the college. Too often, witnesses noted, the administration and the faculty do not respect students and staff. Too often faculty expectations of students are not sufficiently challenging.

Specific recommendations include: 1) the development of common traditions or rituals, such as family days or ceremonies awarding the excellent work of faculty, staff, and students or mentoring and buddy systems, 2) the encouragement of clubs and trips, 3) the increased interaction of the administration with staff and students, for example, periodic tours of the campus by the president and his cabinet members, 4) the initiation of a suggestion box or boxes, and 5) the establishment of forums where students and faculty can share their knowledge and work.

Finally, the committee recommended an ongoing process of open hearings to encourage community members to voice their feelings and suggestions. Though college spirit is not highly developed at present, the committee concluded, it may be "rekindled through a strategically crafted effort that emphasizes respect, inclusiveness, creativity, and teamwork among all members of the college community."

Discussion

Certainly a great deal of information related to community at the college has been developed by the Task Force committees and a large number of valuable suggestions for enhancing community have been proffered. Our problem now is somehow to integrate all this information into a useful form designed to motivate community enhancement.

Data collected suggest the complexity of our college community, and additional data, not collected, dealing with our external communities, our alumni, the neighborhood institutions that surround us, and our neighbors, those people who live near the college, would surely further complicate our perspective. Surely we are not a traditional college living together in a small community that to a large extent we regulate, as well as perhaps derive our principal identities from. Some of us may think of our college in this sense, as a place of grounding our identities and a place of intellectual and personal fulfillment, but many, and perhaps the majority of our community members, have a pragmatic, administrative view of the college; it is a place to work, or a place to obtain credits for a degree.

Bread and butter issues seem to dominate the data that we have collected. Less than 10% of our faculty and students appear to participate in what might be called traditional collegial activities--clubs, teams, forums, public events. Voting in our recent college elections seems to confirm this point. Only 479 students voted in the 1993 Student Governance Elections, and some positions were filled with as few as 22 votes. In a student body of approximately 8000 full time students, only 246 votes were required to elect a student president.

Where student, faculty, and staff concerns seem to be more evident, however, is in what might be called the areas of administrative service and ritual. Faculty and staff overwhelmingly rate building services poor, and although students are more sanguine about

them, even they only rate them excellent to average in 60% of their responses. The majority of students rate registration procedures fair to poor, and faculty comments heavily deplore the present process. The majority of the faculty find cafeteria services, with the exception of prices, to be excellent to average; the student majority finds the reverse; however, in most cases approval ratings barely rise above 55%. Faculty and staff often feel they are locked in with little possibilities of advancement; they feel there are inadequate avenues on campus for resolution of conflicts, and frequently they feel unheeded and disrespected by their superiors. Policies designed to protect rights, health, and welfare on campus seem to work fairly well for faculty and staff, but large numbers of students apparently feel victims of violations of them, and this appears to be especially true for disabled and rehabilitating students, and similar faculty and staff, as well.

Comments at the end of the questionnaires also note problems with ventilation throughout the college, troubles with the Voorhees elevators, a need for increased funding for educational materials and equipment, and an overall need for better communication throughout the college.

Community needs, however, are obviously more than simply administrative. Students do vote in elections. They do attend campus events. They do participate in exemplary activities in the college as a whole, in their departments, in the college's neighborhood, and they are concerned with the needy. They are also concerned with being challenged academically; they wish to be treated as respected, responsible college members. In short, clearly there are numerous communal needs that are collegial, just as there are administrative needs.

What the Task Force committee data and reports seem to argue for, in brief, is a community concept with two active sites--an administrative one and a collegial one--each reflecting important needs of our students.

Two Communities

It is not surprising that we should come to focus on two sites of community, what I would like to call ministrative community and collegial community. Recent discussions of the university present models with similar faces. Robert Birnbaum, for example, discusses four models of organizational functioning in colleges: 1) the collegial institution, 2) the bureaucratic institution, 3) the political institution, and 4) the anarchical institution. And William Bergquist sees four distinct cultures in higher education: 1) the collegial culture, 2) the managerial culture, 3) the developmental culture, and 4) the negotiating culture. Both taxonomies contain the two community sites we are stressing, and Bergquist's four cultures can easily be collapsed into two similar sites by combining his two sets of opposites, managerial and negotiating and collegial and developmental, to produce similar concepts to our two notions of community.

I choose the word ministrative to emphasize the idea of caring for and serving, as well as to retain some of the force of administrative, suggesting a heightened obligation of those who work for the college. In my thinking, however, students also bear obligations for caring and serving. Collegial also suggests serving, but serving together or serving with, out of a personal desire, a wish to participate together--as a colleague.

Ministrative community, as I see it, can be likened to the lower elements on Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs. In a sense it is our basic community--the ground which we all touch. It is all those services and relationships that some might say we take for granted, but which guarantee the peace, civility, and efficiency of our bonds. And it is the expectation that those services should be met, those relationships should be normal and fruitful. Ministrative community is contractual: it expects clarity in rules and procedures, and it expects them to be followed. Ministrative community values efficiency: it sees time as limited and honors its good use; it sees participation pragmatically and is likely to regulate it to suit practical ends.

Collegial community, on the other hand, can be likened to the upper elements on the Maslow hierarchy. Its bonds are more inter as well as intra personal; they are less public and abstract, tending more toward the self and its social formation, more toward the smallness of the nuclear than the extended and the institutional. Its drives are full presence and participation, as opposed to the partial presence and sometimes tenuous participation of ministrative community. Collegial community is marked by a strong desire for belonging and commitment to, for identifying with a communal concept embodied in the college name.

Both communities, obviously, are not totally distinct. There are no real people at our college who fit entirely into either one of these communities. In fact, everyone who can be called a college member participates in both communities; it is impossible not to. Still, many members' communal desires frequently bend in one direction, so it is useful to talk about our collegial and our ministrative communities. Distinguishing these two forms of community makes it possible to clarify sensible goals for enhancing community at the college.

To clarify the value of a dual view, let us inspect the metaphor most commonly presented in Task Force endeavors as the image to inspire enhanced community--the family--or, as commonly spoken, "We need to be more like family." Those who wish collegial community say this most, I believe, out of a desire to be personally a part of, members of what might be seen as a relatively tight family structure. Frequently they are our youngest students--the ones seeking a place--or older returning students--the ones seeking a new place. They desire nurturing at the college and participation, requirements for their social and intellectual growth. Those who desire ministrative community, on the other hand, may have collegial wishes, indeed may hold strong desires to participate and belong, for such desires are natural traces of college life in our culture, but they often lead busy lives. They have little time. They work; they have their own families to tend to; they have difficult commuting schedules. What they really want and need is a kind of extended family, a family that eases their burdens through efficient and caring service.

Accepting the notion that members of the college generally fit into two communal groups is a significant step, I believe, towards revealing a useful approach towards enhancing community at the college. Our task, now, must be reframed: from a single task, enhancing community at the college, we must move to a dual task--enhancing our ministrative and collegial communities. Furthermore, for those like myself and the majority of the Task Force who cherish the stronger, more participatory bonds of collegial community, I believe our ends are more likely to be accomplished if the college proceeds in a twofold manner, for enhancements in ministrative community are likely to stimulate desires for enhancements in collegial community.

Anchors for Community

How shall we anchor our efforts to enhance our two communities? Our answer to this question is found, I believe, by modifying Boyer's six principles to suit the context of our college. Efforts at community enhancement at New York City Technical College should be anchored in four roots: 1) purpose, 2) respect, 3) communication, and 4) celebration. Community can be seen, thus, as a growing tree, enriched from firmly anchored roots. If we wish to enhance community at New York City Technical college, we must nourish our communal roots.

In practical terms what does it mean to nourish our anchors of community? Let us look at each anchor and briefly offer simple, general recommendations, using each as a standard for judging enhancements of ministrative and collegial community. Later, a longer list of specific and practical suggestions will be offered.

Purpose

Purpose means having clear and well-articulated goals and a productive attitude towards achieving them--purposefulness. Its opposites are lack of purpose in aim, or purposelessness, in action. As an institution, our purpose is education, and that primary mission should determine the point of view from which we view our activities. For our ministrative community, purpose means that student time and energies should be directed towards learning. Necessary bureaucratic procedures should be as simple and efficient as possible; and procedures that aren't should not exist. Offices of the college should know their functions and be accountable. Workers should feel that what they do counts, as a means of furthering the college's mission as well as furthering professional opportunities. Physical systems and classroom equipment should work well and facilitate the college's purpose, not slow it down or hinder it. No one who seeks ministrative community can feel happy living in poorly cared for physical systems.

For members of our collegial community, who also merit the benefits of a purposeful ministrative community, purpose means the possibility of educational enrichments inside and outside of the classroom. In a sense the everyday environment should sing with classroom learning. Clubs and curriculum related work and trips, academic forums, cultural festivals, community volunteerism, art displays, performers on campus, business and sports leaders on campus, all are potential outgrowths of such singing. They need to be fostered.

Respect

The second anchor of community is respect. Respect is a trait that we owe every other member of our college community, and it is a trait that we owe, as well, to the environment in which we communally live. The Latin root of respect, respicere, means to look at or to look back. What we respect holds our sight, our regard. Respect and purpose go together, as do respect and responsibility, a necessary adjunct to respect. One does not look back on purposelessness or hold it in high regard, nor does one have regard for

irresponsibility. Respect implies that purpose is taken seriously, its value is regarded, and that action is responsible, purposeful in its attempt to promote the college mission. In our ministrative community respect means that we address each other courteously, that we act civilly in our public interchanges, that we honor communal needs for quiet and security when appropriate, that we take responsibility for maintaining and enriching our physical environment, that we operate with clear rules and procedures that we all live by and not different rules for different people. In our collegial community it means that we encourage openness of discussion, with civility insured, that we encourage honest airing and appreciation of differences, seeing the other and ourselves as clearly as we can.

Communication

Our third anchor is communication. Communication and community share the same root, the common, and both imply what is shared by the general or the public--the group. Respect, as we have already said, implies a basis for communication: it should be open, free. In both our ministrative and collegial communities open communication implies that information be shared and freely disseminated. Community members should be aware of what is going on. They should be able to design their actions with forethought, that is, purposefully. They should not jump reactively to the newly but almost too lately discovered or regret a late bumping into the already passed. Important dates should be published well in advance. The essential outlines of the coming academic year surely should be available before the end of the previous academic year; otherwise, long term purposeful planning is impossible. College members interested in collegial community are entitled to be informed about departmental and college-wide activities that they might wish to participate in. One powerful sense that many Task Force members expressed about communication at the college was that so much more seems to be going on than we hear about.

In addition, as a basic element in ministrative community, all college members are surely entitled to know their rights and responsibilities and who has the authority to act in their behalf and help them. If they feel wronged, their procedures for redress should be easily open to them and swift. No one should feel left hanging with no sense of where to turn or boxed out by rules or procedures that appear to be unclear or unfair.

Celebration

The last anchor for enhancing community at the college is celebration. Celebration and ceremony traditionally go together. Communities traditionally honor the important by performing rituals and holding festivals. What has gone before is thereby conjoined to the present, and those participants in the present are symbolically bonded to those who have participated in the past. Ministrative community is marked by ceremonial bondings. Each ceremony should have a place in defining relationship to the college--right from one's entrance into the college and acceptance into its history of participants to one's leaving and entrance into its extended community of student, faculty, and staff alumni. Celebrations are especially important because they color memory and serve as powerful markings of communal experience. Indeed, frequently they are remembered as essential images of

community experience.

Most Task Force members feel that the college is not well anchored in celebration. As a whole, the college does not seem to have thought much about the values of celebration. In the area of ministrative community as yet we have no agreed upon ritual of beginning, no consistent form for a freshman convocation; we have no special joyous festival like a Founder's Day to celebrate the existence of the college; we have no ceremony to honor those who do splendid work for the college among students, faculty, and staff; and we celebrate graduation away from the college in Manhattan, divorcing ourselves from the Brooklyn community in which we live.

In the area of collegial community, we have produced a profusion of events, but we have not yet defined real celebrations. We also lack a celebratory commitment to campus performances, cultural ("Klitgord") events, and academic forums. Serious thinking is needed to craft a vital calendar of collegial celebrations.

Practical Suggestions

Before I close with a list of suggestions that I believe can immediately nourish the four anchors of community that I have defined, let me remind all members of the college community that community enhancement is a broad action of effort and will. This report suggests a manner of viewing the problem. First, we should be attentive to our two differing communities, our ministrative and our collegial communities, and, second, we should actively pursue strengthening the four anchors of community. Most certainly, everyone who reads this report will have suggestions that go beyond those offered here. Furthermore, many additional suggestions will be found in the documents appended to this report. Those with the power to act--everyone--should not forget to consult them. In the end, community at our college will only be enhanced if we join hands together and work towards its enhancement.

<u>Enhancing Ministrative Community</u>

1. Improve registration. The present process creates much ill will.
2. Review and upgrade all systems of service.
    a. Define clear lines of responsibility.
    b. Set clear standards of performance and expect their fulfillment.
    c. Find better ways to reward excellent performance.
    d. Encourage members to model communal behavior.
3. Examine and improve college security.
    a. Insure that all members display identification cards as they enter the college. It appears that an electronic system of the subway type will be needed to do this.
    b. Develop a plan to discover security needs, and act on it. The Library, for example, has unmet security needs.
4. Set up a system of protocols for inspecting, cleaning, repairing, and upgrading the

campus.
   a. Publicize the system so that members understand its workings.
   b. Computerize information for instant updating and response.
5. Encourage administrators to walk the campus.
   a. The President and Provost should do this on a regular basis.
   b. Administrators should greet people and talk to them about enhancing community.
6. Find better ways to keep in touch with the ways members wish to serve and be served, and actively follow their desires.
   a. What hours, for example, do students need/want the cafeteria open?
   b. Set up a suggestion box and act on useful suggestions.
   c. Hold open hearings on a regular basis, and conduct surveys when they seem useful.
7. Review adjunct needs and find better ways to meet them.
   a. Adjuncts should have office space for holding conferences with students.
   b. They should be properly mentored.
   c. They should be appropriately integrated into department and college life.
8. Find ways to open up avenues for advancement for members who wish them and feel stuck in their jobs.
   a. Make it policy to interpret rules and procedures to advantage members.
   b. Celebrate advancements.
9. Seek better ways to handle morale in times of budget crisis.
   a. Examine ways to improve communication.
   b. Seek better ways to vent feelings and organize constructive responses.
10. Map out a "permanent" ritual calendar and commit the college to its constancy for generations.
   a. It should include a welcoming ceremony or Freshman Convocation.
   b. It should include a fall event--perhaps our present giftgiving event.
   c. It should include a spring event. The Springfest, for example, can be turned into a Founder's Day (and Evening). All classes and college work should be suspended, and everyone should be encouraged to eat and play and celebrate in common.
   d. It should include an event honoring student academic achievement--an Honor's Convocation.
   e. It should include graduation, preferably a public event that occupies central attention in the public spaces of Downtown Brooklyn.
11. Create the college calendar for the coming year by the end of April, and circulate it.
   a. It should include all the important dates of the year--deadlines for financial aid, registration dates, change of curriculum deadlines, Graduation, Freshman Convocation, "Founder's Day" etc.
   b. Incoming freshmen should receive it, as well as all returning students and all other community members.
12. Publish a weekly college calendar, and post it around the college--especially near

the elevators--every Friday afternoon or earlier so that everyone will know what will happen in the coming week.

Enhancing Collegial Community

1. Improve communication at the college.
    a. Study communication at the college, in general, and develop better means to keep all members informed.
    b. Review all college publications and examine their values for enhancing better communication and improving community at the college.
    c. Encourage the college newspaper to come out more frequently, optimally once a week on Monday or Friday, and find the resources to make this possible.
    d. Encourage the college newspaper to cover college activities in more detail. Departmental and club activities should be reported more frequently. The college calendar for the coming week should be made available. Students should be informed about the workings of student services and excellent service should be featured. Team activities should be reported and discussed.
    e. Examine the values of electronic networking and multi-media communication for enhancing community through speedy and more effective communication. Encourage networking and multi-media communication when useful.
2. Encourage participation in student governance.
    a. Set achievable goals and work towards them. A goal of 1000 voters in the next election seems reasonable.
    b. Encourage the newspaper to feature student governance activities even more than it does now.
3. Encourage clubs and volunteer activities.
    a. Note the value of strong faculty and staff participation; encourage it and reward it.
    b. Note the value of organizational space; help clubs find it.
    c. Note the value of aggressive marketing; encourage it.
4. Encourage college teams.
    a. Take pride in them and their ability to bring the college campus together. Teams, at present, do not receive adequate college support.
    b. Encourage the student newspaper to take a more active role in reporting team events.
    c. Encourage college members, especially administrators and faculty, to attend team events.
    d. Encourage team-alumni events, such as the students versus alumni basketball games that have been held in the past. Such events celebrate continuity.
5. Encourage the presentation of regular academic forums, and provide time for

attendance.

a. Encourage interdisciplinary forums that make members of the college community aware of the range of the college's academic interests.
b. Free faculty and staff from meetings and other college work during student activity hours once a month so that they can easily attend featured college activities.
c. Accent "month-long" celebrations with a principal event. Extended events at the college tend to proliferate their efforts rather than concentrate them for enhanced sharing. A well-publicized feature event surrounded by smaller satellite events would promote collegiality more, I believe, than present efforts. Featured events should be planned well in advance and appear on the college's yearly calendar published in April.

6. Feature a noted figure on campus as a principal event at least once a year. Consult with members to insure their desires for such a figure are met.
7. Encourage extension of our community whenever possible, especially within our Brooklyn neighborhood. National and international contacts and exchanges should also be encouraged, especially to broaden students' perspectives. The college should consider joining national student voluntary organizations.
8. Develop means for introducing the various divisions and work areas of the college to the college community. Throughout the year perhaps a series of divisional and work area receptions could be organized to introduce members to their colleagues, as well as to share fellowship and information.
9. Create a once a year ceremony and social event to honor those who have served the college with excellence. Students, staff, and faculty should be honored with appropriate awards. (The Open Hearing Committee suggests calling them "Golden Apple Awards.") A dinner with the families of those honored invited would seem appropriate.
10. The faculty and the staff and the students should be encouraged to create at least one big social event for widespread participation each year.
    a. For the students it might be a dance or a popular culture performance.
    b. For faculty and staff a dinner dance would seem appropriate.
    c. Hopefully these social events would become college rituals.
11. Encourage members to greet each other with a smile and a hello.
12. Encourage members to respect each other and our communal environment.

Conclusion

I am sure by now that all recognize that suggestions related to our two communities begin to intertwine, and if one suggestion flourishes, it is likely that others will flourish as well. In addition, many of you will also recognize that some suggestions have already found their way into the college's strategic plan. We certainly hope that double representation equals double emphasis for action and achievement.

Finally, as our last two suggestions highlight, we can expect to enhance community at the college only if each of us is willing to bear some communal responsibility. Many may

wish to define their communal roles ministratively. Others may wish to range into the collegial when possible; and still others may desire full collegial participation. We need to understand and support all ranges of communal desire, and we need to expect from all our members appropriate respect and responsibility. If the college will take full hold of the four anchors for community that are promoted in this report--purpose, respect, communication, and celebration--I am convinced that all of us can look forward to a richer, more satisfying communal life at New York City Technical College.

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Appendix

New York City Technical College
The City University of New York

From: John Bell, Chair--Task Force on Community Enhancement
To: Strategic Planning Committee NYCTC
Subject: Improving Our Community
Date: March 10, 1992

I come to be critical of NYCTC today--perhaps even harshly critical, some may say, but I believe that we cannot create a better college without being open and frank in our criticism. Frank criticism, I believe, is an act of love. It says that the critic has spent the time to consider his subject carefully and honestly: it says that the critic believes that improvement is possible. Criticism is not, as some might say, a tearing down; at best it is a way of pointing towards, a means of saying we have problems, but things are far from hopeless: there are ways to go, actions to take.

And so I will point to difficulties today, describe some of the wood we find ourselves in, and suggest the roads I would have us take. For the ones we do, I believe, will make all the difference.

Problems with Community

Here then is a list of problems with community:

1. **New York City Technical College, in truth, has no overall sense of community.** Indeed it is not clear that we have a truly public identity. If one says, "I work at New York City Technical College," a typical response is, "What is that? You're some place in Manhattan, right?" Even within ourselves it is not clear that there is a NYCTC qua NYCTC. At best we seem to be an admixture of almost separate communities--departments, clubs, floors, divisions, buildings etc.

2. **At present morale at the college is very poor, the worst it has been in all my twenty-one years at the college.** Much of our low morale is budget driven. Faculty and staff are literally frightened for their jobs. The three years of threat to downsize the college by half or to eliminate it completely have fostered an insidious, unsettling fright that has settled in the limbs, body postures, faces, and eyes of countless college members. Real fear one sees--a fear that come next year there will be no job, no source of family income, no school. In such a climate everything else, all that we do, tends to become trivial. What does effort matter? What does it mean to plan a student's program or to suggest a curriculum improvement? Why is the college lavishing such energy and present resources on planning for the future? Is this just a grand administrative diversion to convince us all that there is hope for a future when in truth we are all blind like a horde of buzzing flies darting happily

about at the beginning of winter?

3. **There is a general sense that the system is wearing out--the center cannot hold.**

A. Registration assaults all--the students, the staff, and the faculty. It seems to be born anew each semester, the child of chaos and slow time, and no one can find relief from its demands. Students typically point to it as the college's most hellish experience, and the staff and faculty spend the early parts of each semester recovering from it. At its core is a Student Information System that after all these years and countless dollars is still incapable of making sure all students have the appropriate prerequisites for the courses they wish to register. Registration thus manages to elongate its tentacles into countless classrooms far into each semester.

B. Cleanliness is wearing thin. Students complain of filthy bathrooms, dirt in the halls and classrooms. I have even heard of ketchup stains on walls lingering for days--as if the walls themselves were bleeding, and no one saw or cared.

C. Security has apparently vanished. Students report that anyone can enter the college. No one really checks ID cards. Offices are regularly broken into and books, pocketbooks, and clothing are pilfered. Computers routinely vanish--they just seem to walk invisibly out of our college doors. Student gambling, it is reported, is a regular activity in many areas of our campus, as is student drinking.

D. Classroom manners have long since bit the dust. Students arrive when they please. Chat when they please. Get up and walk out when they please, making sure to slam the door for an appropriate exit effect, and then, of course, reverse their exit performance five or ten minutes later with an equally noisy entry. No one is supposed to mind--neither the teacher nor one's classmates. And class discussions of decorum, civility, and community responsibility foster no changes in behavior. Indeed, five minutes after such a discussion it is likely that a student will make an exit performance.

4. **There is litle clarity in the college about who is responsible for what.** New students are rarely oriented to the tasks and responsibilities of college work; this is also true for new faculty, as well. And students and new faculty are not the only people who do not seem to know their responsibilities. Throughout the school titles abound, but there appear to be no clear lines of responsibility, few clear lines leading to who can be held accountable. In essence, the buck never stops.

Adjunct faculty perhaps swim in the most amorphous stream in the college. No funds are provided to train them; no real funding is provided to

supervise them; they are provided with virtually no access to department offices and college services, such as computers and reproducing equipment. Yet somehow they are expected to give our students equivalent instruction to full-time faculty and manifest a sense of community with unknown "fellow" department members, unknown administrators, and students that they only come into contact with perhaps three time a week for one semester. 19

5. **Our alumni association is moribund.** As I understand it we continue to have little contact with college alumni. Loyalty, at best, is departmental, but we do not seem to have the wherewithall to keep in contact with our extended community.

Improving Our Community

In short, then, we have many problems with community. Still, though I paint what may seem like a bleak picture, I am not without hope. Obviously there would be no Task Force on Community Enhancement if the present administration did not care about community at NYCTC. Nor would there be a Committee on Strategic Planning, a committee long overdue at this college, if the present administration did not believe that planning ahead is a rational way to improve the college. Many of the present travails of the college are rooted in the college's past history and in decisions made by others no longer at the college. Regardless of the causes and regardless of the debates we could enter into about responsibility for errors in the past, or present errors, it seems to me that we need to focus all our energies into improving what we do. In the short run and the long run many things can be done to improve our community, and I would like to organize them under two basic headings: administrative and community actions.

Administrative Actions

To begin with, as the apt theatrical metaphor goes, we need to get our administrative act together.

1. We need to develop clear and well-known lines of responsibility throughout the college. We all need to better know who is responsible for what. We all need to be clear about what we are expected to do and in what forums expectations can be debated and agreed upon.

2. We need to make registration work rather than work us over. The system requires a far clearer structure and a clearer sense of command. Our computer system must be upgraded to serve the full needs of the

college. We should be able to control what it does rather than be controlled by its inadequacies.

3. We need to secure our facilities properly.

A. We should install a bar code entry system related to the one used in the library. All students should enter through bar code turnstiles, as commuters do in many transit systems across the country.

B. Buildings should be patrolled regularly and security officers should discourage littering, gambling, drinking, smoking, and inappropriate behavior. Members of the administration should visibly back up security officers and heed their advice.

C. Important equipment should be inventoried and should always be locatable. The college community should be made aware of thefts and vandalism.

4. We need to make sure our college is properly cleaned and maintained. At present the college does not have clear proceedures to manage and clean its various buildings. In the classroom I am sure the college teaches the virtues of management protocols and computerized check-lists, but I do not believe the college practices what it preaches. There is no reason, I believe, that we cannot follow sound building and hotel practices to insure that our facilities are well managed and well kept.

5. The college needs a clear attendance and behavior policy--one that sets both standards for decorum and attendance, and one that the school is willing to enforce at all levels.

6. We need to insist that all new students, staff, and faculty are properly oriented to their roles and responsibilities at the college. All students should be required to take AA101 which should stress what the college does as well as make clear the expected behaviors of college students. Present efforts to orient staff and new faculty, especially adjuncts, need to be supported and enhanced.

7. We must find ways to train, supervise, and support the work of adjunct faculty. We need to make them far more an integral part of our college community than they are.

Community Actions

In addition, we need to practice community action: we need to work out a model of community at our college--one that gives value both to the college whole and to its parts. Here are some needs that I believe point to elements of such a model:

1. We need a ritual calendar--regular events to bring various college constituencies as well as the whole together.

2. We need more shared cultural events--concerts, plays, scholarly discourse--that would arouse community interest and provide things in common for many to talk about.

3. We need to think more about the virtues of athletics for instilling school spirit and binding together our college community.

4. We need to vivify our alumni association. We need to encourage our graduates, as well as our students, to become part of a rich ongoing process of loyalty, service, good works, and communal support.

5. We need to reach out more into our local community to make friends with our neighbors, to offer them our services, and to solicit their support. We need to be more than simply a college located downtown; we need to a powerful community institution.

6. Most of all, we need to find ways to appreciate--in both the aesthetic and fiscal senses-- the dedicated and good-hearted workers that we have on campus.

Every day I am amazed by how many of my colleagues, at all levels, really care about our students, and yet every day I am also troubled by how much good effort and care seems to be wasted, stiffled, or simply goes unnoticed. New York City Technical College is a caring institution, but we have many problems. We must find ways to make this institution work better; we must find ways to improve our morale; we must find ways to bind ourselves more together as a community; we must make the quality of our corporate spirit match the quality of the best of our individual spirits.

New York City
Technical College
The City University of New York

New York City Technical College
of the City University of New York

TO: John Bell, Chair, Task Force on Community Enhancement

FROM: Francine Campone, Chair, Research Subcommittee

DATE: February 28, 1992

RE: Preliminary Report

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The Research Subcommittee has been engaging in two types of activities: a review of the literature (Professors Jefferson, Selvadurai and Bakewicz) and a study to identify exemplary communities within the college (Ms. Campone, Professor Mason). A summary of the literature review will be a component of this committee's final report. There are a few more identified "communities" to be studied and the findings in the final report will reflect the completed data. Nonetheless, we wish to share the results of the study to date.

Using an idea suggested by "High Faculty Morale: What Exemplary Colleges Do Right" (R. Eugene Rice and Anne Austin, Change, vol. 20 March/April 1988, pp. 50-58), the researchers sought to identify departments, clubs, and other organized groups on campus which embody a sense of community and exemplify the characteristics of a constructive and enthusiastic community. The researchers then interviewed the person or persons in charge of the identified groups to determine what those groups or organizations did to generate the sense of community. Suggestions for groups, organizations and individuals were solicited from the provost and the vice-president for student afffairs, all six division deans, student government and members of the subcommittee.

Six groups and several academic departments were identified, including:

- four student clubs/organizations- CACTUS (Civil and Construction Engineering Technology), the Architectural Technology Club, the Mechanical Engineering Technology Club and NYPIRG. Professors Elliot Colchamiro, Bill Berensman, and Bernie Ospitale respectively were interviewed for the clubs; Ms. Valerie Nash, the student representative for NYPIRG at City Tech, was interviewed regarding that group.

- SHARE, a self-help food cooperative program which has a base at New York City Technical College. Prof. Carmen Hernandez was interviewed for this group.

- the Hotel and Restaurant Technology Department. Prof.

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Patricia Bartholomew was interviewed for this department. 23

Findings

A. Student Clubs/Cooperative Groups (SHARE and NYPIRG)

With respect to the student clubs, there were five elements that were key to establishing and maintaining a strong sense of enthusiasm and belonging: the faculty advisor, opportunities to work and travel together, a strong organizational image, a welcoming physical space or environment, and aggressive outreach and marketing. The successful elements of NYPIRG and SHARE were somewhat similar to each other and had some elements in common with the clubs. SHARE and NYPIRG rely less on a strong individual providing structure and leadership, and more on management by consensus and focused group activity. It must be noted, however, that in the case of SHARE, initiating and carrying on the project has been the work of two very dedicated and hard-working Student Affairs professionals who do not see themselves as "the leaders". Like the clubs, both offer opportunities for hands-on group work experience coupled with affiliation with larger groups and extensive recognition for achievements and efforts.

LEADERSHIP. All of the faculty advisors to the identified student clubs serve as the "glue", providing structure and continuity. Each emphasized, in the interview, the importance of their being available to the students to assist with any concern the students might have. They, and the department colleagues whom they occasionally recruited to assist, were very aggressive in recruiting student members. Recruitment included written notices, displays and presentations in their own and other classes. One major task of all three advisors is to "recruit" or "press into service" good students who serve as club officers. In one instance, the advisor confided that he ran three separate clubs especially to provide officer roles to a greater number of students, thereby increasing the students' investment in club activities. The faculty advisors also drum up donations for various club membership "perks": discount coupons, raffle prizes, pens/pins with the club name, etc. These faculty do not stand on ceremony; interactions with students are based on their having a mentoring rather than a parental role. The faculty advisors to these successful clubs invest a great deal of personal time and energy, and occasionally their own money, in working with the students. None reported any significant or particular department reward or recognition; all reported that their involvement helped them to get greater satisfaction from their commitment to teaching, giving them an opportunity to take the educational process beyond the classroom. Faculty involved with these clubs form close attachments to the students, many of whom returned for alumni events or, as graduates, serve as conduits to job opportunities for subsequent students. "Community", in these groups, includes past and present students, networking through the faculty advisor with professionals in the field and with department and division faculty.

In the case of SHARE, the two Student Affairs professionals who initiated the project at the college and who have shepherded its implementation along, see themselves more as catalysts than as "leaders". Both hold a very strong belief in the equality and dignity of all people. The objective of the project is to be inclusive of all participants in every possible way. There is no formal hierarchy. There are few formal meetings; the operational aspects of the program are outlined in the guidelines and everyone carries out his or her task as a part of the larger whole. Communications tend to be informal, on the phone or, when necessary, in brief face-to-face encounters.

NYPIRG, as a college chapter of a larger, state-wide organization, is also conforms to a loosely organized governance/leadership plan. The campus NYPIRG representative is a student who is selected by the organization's main office. She is a peer who serves as a liaision with the larger organization. Operational decision-making is left to the students participating in specific projects, who have open access to NYPIRG leadership and to the professionals (attorneys, lobbyists, etc.) who support NYPIRG's efforts at the legislative level.

ACTIVITIES. In all cases, the clubs, SHARE and NYPIRG provide opportunities for very specific, hands-on tasks for students and faculty (and, in the case of SHARE, staff) to work on together outside of the classroom. One club, through the faculty advisor, works on community-based projects such as designing public space for local street renovations. All of the groups take field trips, both recreational and professional in nature. One advisor emphasized the importance of holding regular, weekly meetings with a specific focus (a speaker, workshop, etc.). One advisor recruits good students from classes and posts their phone numbers to serve as a kind of informal "help hotline" for students having difficulty in their technical coursework. One advisor arranges marathon work sessions with students toward the end of the semester when projects are due. Food is brought in, but the focus is on the work; students must commit to remaining for the whole "marathon" period. Students work on their individual projects but also help each other to complete the work. Club social events at the college include an alumni party, bringing current students together with graduates who are in senior colleges or in the field; holiday parties and the aforementioned outings. One club has challenged other technology clubs to a one-day paintball "war games" outing in the Catskills.

As a food cooperative, there are several tasks for SHARE participants. All of the work - picking up and packaging the food from the warehouse, distribution, record-keeping and so forth- is done by the participants by way of fulfilling a two-hour per month community service commitment. Distribution days are characterized by a strong sense of family; participants bring their children, spouses, and siblings. These days are an opportunity to catch up on news, swap recipes, share and compare experiences. The contributions and efforts of every individual are recognized and acknowledged in the monthly newsletter and in other forums. Each

participant performs a task that is vital to the success of the project; there is no wasted energy or "make-work" activity in SHARE.

IMAGE. All of the club advisors and their students have developed a strong image of the group. This is accomplished through the use of a club logo, used on all club materials and outreach information; the use of a clever or catchy name (CACTUS); identification and reinforcement of links with larger national organizations; club membership cards and so forth. Whenever possible, advisors recruited colleagues to participate in special events (e.g. presenting workshops), thus reinforcing within the department the club's image as an integral part of the academic/professional area. The advisors we interviewed are truly cheerleaders for their groups and reinforce the group image at every opportunity.

The SHARE Program began with a statement of purpose: goals, objectives and underlying philosophy. This statement of philosophy sets the tone for all interactions within the group and establishes a clear image: egalitarian, people-to-people, practical and spirited. This is reinforced in the monthly newsletter produced by the project participants, which names names in recognizing and thanking individuals who have supported SHARE efforts. Photos of participants and their families are posted on a bulletin board outside the office of the two City Tech SHARE initiators; these are changed to display special events and highlight special activities within the program. Key words - family, sharing, respect and spirit- appear frequently in the group's publications and in discussion with the founders.

NYPIRG also relies heavily on print media to reinforce its image. NYPIRG ads emphasize student activism and consumer awareness. Materials call upon students to get involved; "activity" and "involvement" are key terms. Students who are particularly active on specific campaigns are recognized at the local level and at a semi-annual conference of students from NYPIRG chapters across the state. NYPIRG volunteers whose activity has been key to particular campaigns are mentioned by name in the reports produced by NYPIRG-affiliated lobbyists and professional activists.

ENVIRONMENT/SPACE. Two of the three club advisors specifically noted the importance of a physical space or environment that the club members can "own". These tend to be spaces adjacent to or a part of the department office complex. In one instance, the department secretary serves as a kind of mentor/mom to the students in the group and her desk served as a hub of student activity. In some cases, the department office space includes a shelf or bookcase of professional materials available for student browsing or reference. All of the advisors noted the importance of the students having a "homey place" or a sense of turf to which they could retreat from the more anonymous college environment.

The NYPIRG Program has its own office space at City Tech. It is the nexxus of the group's activities and a space where the participants go just to "hang out", answer phones, plan strategies and share conversation with other students who share their consumer orientation.

OUTREACH/AFFILIATION. As noted in the section on faculty advisors, above, the faculty play a key role in recruiting students to the clubs, relying not only on printed material but on colleagues and personal presentations. Current members and word of mouth are also a part of an aggressive recruitment campaign; current members particularly emphasize the benefits of membership.

NYPIRG also relies on printed outreach materials, coupled with extensive person-to-person recruiting. This takes thc form of tabling in the Namm lobby and telephone campaigns. SHARE also utilizes printed recruitment materials, word of mouth from current participants and referrals from colleagues within the college. Many of the participants bring in friends, neighbors and classmates. Participation has increased significantly in the three years the program has been on campus.

B. Academic Departments

Hotel and Restaurant Management Technology

The faculty involvement in community service is a key element of this department and it carries over to faculty-student projects. The department has a faculty committee on community relations which develops and works on special community service events which involvement students. Activities such as the Gifts for Special Children campaign, which started out as a small student-to-student event (students asking fellow students to support sign-making, collection and contribution efforts) instill students with a sense of pride. Such events are a regular part of the department's operation; the chair emphasizes the importance of giving back and faculty attempt to instill a sense of values beyond material success. The department has an orientation for incoming students who, by virtue of meeting certification requirements, will be enrolling in department courses; a separate orientation, for students in the pre-hotel category, is under consideration in an effort to involve and engage these students in the department culture and ethos as early as possible. The chair of the department encourages faculty participation, though no one is required to participate; such activities are a matter of personal choice. With the President's indications of support and interest in faculty community service, such activities by Hotel department faculty are now considered in support of promotion. The department clubs are very active and closely aligned with department activities. Again, faculty are key in serving as advisors and providing a sense of direction and a professional ethos. The clubs are task oriented, providing students with opportunities for professional networking and skills advancement.

New York City
Technical College
The City University of New York

TO: Professor John Bell, Chair, Task Force on Community Enhancement

FROM: Francine Campone

DATE: June 9, 1992

RE: Recommendations

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At midsemester, the research subcommittee which I chair provided the Task Force with a document which outlined preliminary findings in a study of successful community-building activities on this campus. These findings essentially reinforced two commonly held premises at City Tech: that students and faculty have strong loyalties to their departments and that faculty are the catalyst for change. It was the belief of the subcommittee that the final results of this study, coupled with a review of the literature, would lead to a series of recommendations to the task force on the fostering of a sense of community on the City Tech campus. As a consequence of this very tumultuous and difficult semester, we were unable to finish our task as a group. Nonetheless, I have taken the liberty of coupling the findings of our study with the recommendations of Ernest Boyer (In Search of Community), to generate some recommendations of my own. Boyer presents six overall principles which he believes should guide decision-makers in establishing a stronger sense of community on our college campuses.

1. College communities should be educationally purposeful, with faculty and students sharing common academic goals and working together to strengthen teaching and learning. Toward this end, I suggest

- developing learning groups or collaborative learning clusters which are curriculum or disciplined based and which take place in the learning centers. These would comprise informal discussions on predetermined topics in a discipline, led by faculty, CLT's or senior students.
- enhancing career-related clubs and club activities.

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Clearly, clubs are a powerful forum for faculty-student interaction. They help students to develop a sense of common purpose and group cohesiveness, as well as professional identity. To carry out this recommendations, faculty advisors would need to be identified and the institution would need to provide some rewards and incentives for their participation.

- encouraging field trips- some career/curriculum related, others for groups of students and faculty who share common interests.

- holding divisional freshman convocations at the beginning of each term to introduce students to the divisional faculty, provide some history of the college and the disciplines, help students connect with the culture of the profession and provide an opportunity for social interaction with peers.

2. A college community should be open, with freedom of expression protected and civility affirmed.

Re: freedom of expression, I recommend

- developing joint student affairs/academic affairs sponsored forums and panel discussions on current issues and events, linked with classroom assignments and activities which prepare students to engage in knowledgeable discussion and which provide opportunity for follow-up debate in the classroom context. Such forums should address both topics of general interest (e.g. the recent Rodney King verdict) and those specific to a field (e.g. ethical issues in health care)

- encouraging greater student and faculty participation in the college's student media: more student writing for the newspaper, greater faculty mentoring of would-be writers and editors.

Re: affirming civility

- administration, faculty and staff should model civil behavior in all of their interactions, both public and private

- administration, faculty and staff should assume an instructional responsibility with students behaving inappropriately

- develop a campaign to establish a collegiate environment- e.g. through posters, flyers, etc. This should follow the Tech Pride campaign model, with broader involvement of faculty, staff, administration and students

3. A campus community is a just community. To achieve this, we should

- expand and enhance the mediation/conflict resolution training program initiated by the Office of Student Life this year. Train students in conflict resolution/mediation skills and offer a forum for the non-judicial resolution of interpersonal grievances

- provide monthly forums on particular cultures represented at City Tech, exploring and educating the community through displays, classroom-related activities, open classes, films and cultural events
- hold monthly spiritual/religious activities, focusing on a different religion each month, which are open to the entire college community

4. A campus community is a disciplined community. This suggests we

- establish a peer group review board or student court to establish and enforce standards of behavior which are congruent with the college and its culture
- articulate and reinforce professional standards of behavior for students in the classroom and clinical practice

5. A campus community is a caring community. To achieve this, we should

- encourage all members of the community to participate in community service and volunteer activities. Establish a bank of community service opportunities and mechanisms for rewards/recognition
- support/enhance annual events such as the conference on volunteer service and the New York City School Volunteer Program recognition day held annually on our campus
- establish a "volunteer bank" of students, faculty and staff who are willing to assist at special events on campus
- conduct regular giving drives in addition to the highly successful Gifts for Special Children. These may include clothing/food drives for local homeless shelters, disaster response drives (e.g. hurricanes, floods, etc., particularly in those countries from which many of our students have emigrated)
- offer specialized training -e.g. emergency medical technician- on-campus at little or no cost

6. A campus community celebrates both tradition and change. I suggest

- encouraging greater faculty and staff participation in honors and commencement (e.g. reduce offices to skeleton staff to allow attendance at commencement, provide other incentives for faculty)
- developing and implementing an annual college-wide celebration (e.g. founders day)
- revisiting the offering of a regular arts/cultural events series in Klitgord Auditorium. At one time, the Division of Continuing Education coordinated a lecture/film/performance series which brought together all facets of the campus community and the larger community for Thursday club hours lectures by well-known speakers and for weekend cultural performance events.

- developing an advisory board to assist in the best utilization of space within the new student union building (due to open in Fall 1992) and to encourage multi-cultural celebrations developed and implemented by student clubs

- encouraging academic departments and divisions to plan and implement annual social events for students, faculty and staff; similarly social events should be planned which bring together staff from administrative offices.

TASK FORCE ON COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT
RESEARCH COMMITTEE

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Prepared by Prof. Jacqueline Jefferson
May 1993

New York City
Technical College
The City University of New York

Inter-Office Memorandum

DATE: October 27, 1992

TO: Professor John Bell, Chair, Task Force on Community Enhancement

FROM: Professor Nathan Vaisman, Mechanical Technology/CADD/MC

SUBJECT: Student, Faculty Questionnaire

By the end of the Spring 1992 semester, the Questionnaire Subcommittee which I chair, had completed the Faculty and Students Questionnaire. All members of this committee were involved in developing both questionnaires and I am deeply thankful to all members of the committee. The results on the faculty questionnaire is available at this time. (See attached questionnaire sheet). The following are the most common comments:

1. Poor ventilation in the college.
2. The No Smoking rule is not enforced.
3. More funds for educational materials. (Supplies, maintenance of existing equipment).
4. Poor workmanship of the elevators in Voorhees Hall.
5. Smaller classes.
6. Reasonable registration period.
7. Reorganization of the registration process.

At the present time the committee is working on the local community questionnaire.

:fs

PN 157 Rev. 4/90 50M

A group of faculty, staff and students is working to improve [illegible]. Could you please take a few minutes to let us know how you feel about a number of services at the college? Thank you very much. Your comments are greatly appreciated.

1. What is your present status at City Tech?

a) I am a full-time	1. ( ) teaching faculty	176
	2. ( ) non-teaching faculty	33
	3. ( ) other instructional staff	15
	4. ( ) civil service staff	38
	5. ( ) other full-time	23
b) I am a part-time	1. ( ) adjunct faculty	32
	2. ( ) other part-time	13

2. The college has a new cafeteria vendor this fall. We are interested to know your opinion of the food, service and prices.

I use the cafeteria:

More than once a week	1. ( )	60
Once a week	2. ( )	34
Rarely	3. ( )	89
Never	4. ( )	63

I rate:	(1) Excellent	(2) Average	(3) Fair	(4) Poor	(5) No Opinion
quality of food	( ) 23	( ) 60	( ) 42	( ) 20	( ) 35
prices	( ) 24	( ) 50	( ) 47	( ) 41	( ) 34
cleanliness	( ) 26	( ) 65	( ) 34	( ) 24	( ) 34
variety	( ) 24	( ) 47	( ) 32	( ) 26	( ) 36
courtesy of staff	( ) 34	( ) 42	( ) 30	( ) 15	( ) 33

3. Which City Tech building do you use most of the time? (please check one only).

1.	( )	Namm Hall	163
2.	( )	Voorhees Hall (186 Jay)	15
3.	( )	Midway (250 Jay)	9
4.	( )	Pearl	31
5.	( )	General	2
6.	( )	Atrium	18
7.	( )	Environmental Center	3
8.	( )	2 MetroTech Center	7

3A. When do you spend most of your time in the building you identified in question 3 above?

(1) Days	(2) Evenings	(3) Weekends
( ) 211	( ) 43	( ) 6

4. How would you rate the building you identified in question 3 in terms of the following?

	(1) Excellent	(2) Average	(3) Fair	(4) Poor	(5) No Opinion
elevator service	( ) 7	( ) 36	( ) 63	( ) 144	( ) 7
cleanliness	( ) 12	( ) 39	( ) 58	( ) 160	( ) 3
ventilation	( ) 5	( ) 32	( ) 81	( ) 127	( ) 5
safety	( ) 8	( ) 41	( ) 87	( ) 115	( ) 5
observance of non-smoking areas	( ) 7	( ) 45	( ) 80	( ) 100	( ) 5
cleanliness of lavatories	( ) 6	( ) 42	( ) 61	( ) 116	( ) 3

The following questions are designed to find out how you feel about working at City Tech. The possible responses range from (1) Agree Strongly to (4) Disagree Strongly and (5) No Opinion.

	(1) Agree Strongly	(2) Agree Somewhat	(3) Disagree Somewhat	(4) Disagree Strongly	(5) No Opinion
5. My opinions and concerns are respected and heeded my superiors.	( ) 41	( ) 34	( ) 26	( ) 16	( ) 4
6. There are opportunities for advancement or promotion in my career here.	( ) 5	( ) 12	( ) 15	( ) 29	( ) 2
7. There is a good sense of community in the office or area where I work.	( ) 14	( ) 26	( ) 11	( ) 14	( ) 2
8. There exist adequate avenues on campus for conflict resolution for faculty and staff.	( ) 4	( ) 9	( ) 34	( ) 16	( ) 9

9. How would you rate the impact of the recent budget crisis on the college?

	(1) No Impact	(2) Little Impact	(3) Some Impact	(4) Great Impact	(5) No Opinion
with respect to:					
morale	( ) 0	( ) 2	( ) 9	( ) 82	( ) 0
job security	( ) 0	( ) 2	( ) 10	( ) 106	( ) 0
employee benefits	( ) 0	( ) 10	( ) 19	( ) 112	( ) 0
availability of classes	( ) 0	( ) 3	( ) 14	( ) 83	( ) 23
class size	( ) 0	( ) 0	( ) 12	( ) 146	( ) 0
resources (equipment/ supplies)	( ) 0	( ) 0	( ) 6	( ) 157	( ) 5

(PLEASE TURN OVER)

10. The college has many policies designed to protect your rights, health and welfare on campus. We are interested in finding out if you know about these policies and if you feel you have been a victim of a violation of any policy or policies at the college.

	I am aware of policy	I believe I have been a victim of a violation of this policy			
		(1) Very Much	(2) Somewhat	(3) Not at All	(4) No Opinion
a. Affirmative action/ non-discrimination on the basis of:					
sex	( ) 156	( ) 6	( ) 1	( ) 141	( ) 3
sexual orientation	( ) 153	( ) 2	( ) 0	( ) 106	( ) 4
marital status	( ) 114	( ) 3	( ) 2	( ) 91	( ) 6
religion	( ) 129	( ) 3	( ) 4	( ) 73	( ) 12
race	( ) 131	( ) 0	( ) 3	( ) 32	( ) 4
color	( ) 147	( ) 0	( ) 2	( ) 64	( ) 7
national origin	( ) 118	( ) 0	( ) 3	( ) 51	( ) 11
b. drug and alcohol policy	( ) 137	( ) 0	( ) 1	( ) 68	( ) 14
c. sexual harassment	( ) 141	( ) 0	( ) 3	( ) 73	( ) 16
d. hazing	( ) 123	( ) 0	( ) 0	( ) 48	( ) 7
e. academic freedom	( ) 107	( ) 0	( ) 2	( ) 59	( ) 15
f. Americans with Disabilities Act	( ) 73	( ) 0	( ) 5	( ) 28	( ) 36
g. Sec. 503 of Rehabilitation Act	( ) 47	( ) 0	( ) 3	( ) 34	( ) 43
h. Sec. 504 of Rehabilitation Act	( ) 53	( ) 4	( ) 2	( ) 46	( ) 32
i. Other (specify)	( ) 0	( ) 0	( ) 0	( ) 0	( ) 0

_____

_____

11. New York City Technical College holds a number of events over the course of the year. How many of these have you participated in? (check box next to each event in which you have participated).

1. 29 ( ) Women's History Month
2. 17 ( ) Black History Month
3. 14 ( ) Italian Heritage Month
4. 25 ( ) Puerto Rican Heritage Month
5. 34 ( ) Multicultural Awareness Week
6. 12 ( ) Alcohol Awareness Week
7. 16 ( ) Springfest
8. 9 ( ) Mickey Leland–Ivan Tillem World Peace Studies Seminar
9. 17 ( ) TheatreWorks
10. 28 ( ) Grace Gallery
11. 11 ( ) Get Healthy Day
12. 2 ( ) Fresh Start Stop Smoking Program
13. 33 ( ) Gifts for Special Children
14. 9 ( ) SHARE
15. 14 ( ) Other (please specify)

12. What additional events would you like to see celebrated on campus?

13. What suggestions do you have for events, activities or improved service that would serve to bring faculty, staff and students closer together?

14. Comments: _____

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE TO PROF. NATHAN VAISMAN, VOORHEES HALL, ROOM 514 NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1991

Community Enhancement Questionnaire Group and Institutional Research (12/91)

DATE: April 18, 1993

TO: Professor John Bell, Chair, Task Force on Community Enhancement

FROM: Professor Nathan Vaisman, Mechanical Engineering Technology/CADD/MC

SUBJECT: Student Questionnaire - March, 1993

The Questionnaire Subcommittee which I chair, completed the student questionnaire. I wish to thank all members of the committee for their involvement in developing the questionnaires. The following are the results of 1000 questionnaires:

1. What is your present status at City Tech?

a) I am a:
   1. Full-time student - 368
   2. Part-time student - 98

b) I am a:
   1. First-time freshman - 58
   2. Continuing student - 261
   3. Transfer student - 27
   4. Non-degree student - 25

2. We have a new cafeteria vendor. What is your opinion of the food, service and prices?

I use the cafeteria:
1. More than once a week - 141
2. Once a week - 53
3. Rarely - 116
4. Never - 119

I Rate:	Excellent	Average	Fair	Poor	No Opinion
Quality of Food	29	145	92	50	103
Prices	14	85	104	74	103
Cleanliness	36	89	95	39	82
Variety	24	82	79	33	74
Courtesy of Staff	47	92	85	29	96

3. Which City Tech building do you use most of the time?

Namm Hall	348
Voorhees Hall	80
Midway	16
Pearl	17
General	12
Atrium	17
Environmental Ctr.	7

3a. When do you spend most of your time in college?

Days	322
Evenings	146
Weekends	12

4. How would you rate the building you identified in qestion 3?

	Excellent	Average	Fair	Poor	No Opinion
Elevator Service	73	160	108	64	17
Cleanliness	107	97	101	26	13
Ventilation	70	142	129	36	17
Safety	86	181	91	30	16
Non-Smoking Areas	72	135	87	72	27
Cleanliness of Lavatories	75	151	113	48	22

5. How would you rate the following steps of registration?

	Excellent	Average	Fair	Poor	No Opinion
Academic Advisement	92	147	89	54	19
Selection of Courses & Sections	48	144	100	99	22
Register in Cafeteria	29	111	102	90	29
Financial Aid	38	101	110	88	41
Paying By Mail	44	124	107	78	40

6. We are interested in learning of any suggestions you may have to improve registration.

1) Need more computers in cafeteria to speed up registration.
2) Not enough help to students. Students must do everything by themself.
3) Takes too much time to register.
4) Not enough sections offered for students which cannot participate in EAR.
5) Each department must have a computer on their desks for faster advisement.
6) More information to be given to freshmen.
7) Freshmen must be advised before registration.
8) More contact between faculty and students.
9) Up-date the registration process, check other colleges to see how they register students.
10) Make EAR available to all students.
11) Too many check points for students during registration.
12) Mail registration booklets to students so they can prepare which courses to take.
13) Let major department register students.
14) Explain the Financial Aid process to students.
15) Process students in one building.
16) Send registration package to student's home.
17) Registration should be done by mail.

17. Your opinion of Academic Services that you receive at the college.

	Agree Strongly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Strongly	No Opinion
a) Faculty maintains sufficient office hours	77	194	49	20	35
b) I feel I get help I need from my department	80	174	61	22	33
c) The student evaluation of teaching is used to evaluate faculty	52	189	59	10	45
d) If I have a problem with a faculty member I know where to go	62	182	46	34	43

8. The college has many policies designed to protect your rights, health and welfare on campus. Do you know about these policies?

	I Am Aware of Policy	Very Much	Somewhat	Not at All	No Opinion
A. Affirmative Action					
Sex	102	43	48	66	77
Sexual Orientation	81	29	47	73	69
Marital Status	82	26	53	64	66
Religion	82	34	48	68	64
Race	83	34	56	68	58
Color	80	30	49	61	66
National Origin	79	34	54	55	66
B. Drug and Alcohol Policy	95	32	45	65	69
C. Sexual Harassment	79	34	50	66	65
D. Hazing	72	30	48	63	69
E. Academic Freedom	71	32	51	56	68
F. Americans With Disabilities Act	71	33	46	60	70
G. Sec. 503 of Rehabilitation Act	60	29	45	63	69
H. Sec. 504 of Rehabilitation Act	55	30	41	66	71

9. New York City Technical College holds a number of events over the course of the year. How many of these have you participated in?

1.	Women's History Month	27
2.	Black History Month	60
3.	Italian Heritage Month	11
4.	Puerto Rican Heritage Month	27
5.	Multi-Cultural Awareness Week	14
6.	Alcohol Awareness Week	22
7.	Spring Fest	32
8.	World Peace Studies Seminar	08
9.	Theatre Works	13
10.	Grace Gallery	14
11.	Get Healthy Day	27
12.	Stop Smoking Program	13
13.	Gifts For Special Children	20
14.	SHARE	08

10. What additional events would you like to see celebrated on campus?

1. Caribbean Festival
2. Dominican Heritage Month
3. Dr. M. L. King Celebration
4. Student Talent Month
5. Street Festival

11. Which of the following activities, services or facilities have you taken advantage of?

1.	Students Clubs	57
2.	Athletic Facilities	39
3.	Team Sports	28
4.	Learning Center	105
5.	Tutoring	77
6.	Library	193
7.	Bookstore	135

12. What new activities, services or facilities would you like to see created at the college?

1. Psychologist to work with troubled students.
2. Clubs for evening students.
3. More tutors.
4. Swimming pool.
5. Game room.
6. Baseball team.
7. Musical performers on campus.
8. Student dancing clubs.
9. A better P.E. curriculum.

13. What suggestions do you have for events, activities or improved service that would serve to bring faculty, staff and students closer together?

1. Better communication.
2. Music talent show.
3. Longer hours for Learning Center.

New York City
Technical College
The City University of New York

Office of
External Relations

"RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY: Ingredients to developing a sense of community" at New York City Technical College

A Report Prepared by the Subcommittee on Open Hearings Report

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The following report has been developed pursuant to the charge given by Professor John Bell, Chair of the Task Force on Community Enhancement.

The purpose of this report is twofold. It will identify and focus on specific suggestions, activities and events which were recommended to foster a greater sense of "community" at City Tech. Second, the report will highlight and explore the tremendous ambivalence that exists among the students, staff and faculty about the creation of "community" at the college.

It is fair to say that the college spirit at City Tech is not highly developed now. That spirit may, however be rekindled through a strategically crafted effort that emphasizes respect, inclusiveness, creativity, and teamwork among all members of the college community. The hope that the college community can become closer but is a definite outgrowth of the hearings. That hope is what this report seeks to tap.

Process

The subcommittee on Open Hearings was asked to organize open hearings...."to gather information and opinions about enhancing the community." To meet that mandate, two separate hearings were

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held--on March 18 in Voorhees Hall and on April 1 in Namm Hall--to which all members of the college community were invited. Flyers were distributed campuswide, the student goverment association and college clubs were notified. Announcements were placed in the City Tech Bulletin and individual faculty, students and staff were personally invited to testify. As a result of the outreach, approximately 100 people attended the two sessions, 30 testified and several individuals spoke with the subcommittee chair privately or submitted written suggestions.

General Observations and Findings

In the judgement of the subcommittee, the most important findings were not the individual, specific activities recommended. Rather, the most cogent finding was that **RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY** must be given and earned so a "community" can be developed.

Simply put, much of the testimony focused on the respect or lack thereof among the administration, faculty, staff, and sutdents. The perception, which strongly informs reality at City Tech, is that administration and faculty particularly do not respect students or staff.

Another often cited observation was that faculty expectations of students are in fact too low. Students made it known that they were looking to be interacted with, challenged, mentored and nurtured. Several said that on the other hand what

was communicated to them by faculty members was disinterest and at times, disdain.

SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS

Several of the faculty, staff and students pointed out that "community" at City Tech will be enhanced by the development of rituals. The creation of common traditions, ceremonies, and activities are important ingredients necessary to promote family, neighborhoods, and nations. The same is true in the context of this college.

The development and promotion of field trips with students, the establishment of family, alumni and spirit days were suggested. The desirability of developing a gospel club, cheerleaders and booster clubs were also advanced.

One noteworthy ritualistic suggestion was that faculty be celebrated through the creation of a "Golden Apple Award" for teaching excellence. Of course that concept could be further developed through the creation of various awards for staff and students.

A particularly chilling observation was offered by a student. That was, "students want to leave City Tech. They need a reason to stay." City Tech, to some, can be a formidible institution. Students can be discouraged from asking questions or interacting with others. To overcome that problem, one participant suggested that a cadre of students preferably

upperclass men and women--be recruited to be "buddies" and/or mentors to entering students.

To facilitate the smooth entry of students to City Tech, staff suggested that the college conduct an early advisement for freshmen. During that process, club and student government members should be invited to participate and brief the students on the college and its characteristics.

The timely and appropiate provision of student services concerned a number of witnesses. Apparently, there is a perception among some that student needs are not being met. The specific recommendations were:

(1) Develop and publicize crisis intervention teams, sites, communication techniques and strategies. More than one witness suggested that students don't know where to look for help or how to obtain such. Others commented that peer counseling with college credit or student involement should be provided;

(2) Establish and publicize financial workshops for students.

(3) Have resume workshops for students.

(4) Have career fairs (suggested particularly for engineering students.)

(5) Develop a women's center which, among other things, will address the special needs of women who are returning to the educational setting.

(6) Sponsor an "awareness day" at which the general student body can become more acquainted with the students with disabilities as well as the services available to them.

As mentioned earlier, witnesses were concerned about the distance between administrators, faculty, and students. The specific suggestions relevant to that topic were:

1. Find ways to reduce the students anxiety and fear of approaching administrators and faculty. Remove the perception that "faculty is on a pedestal."
2. Offer counseling courses to faculty and administrators on the "new age" students.
3. The president, his cabinet and other important college officers should periodically tour the institution and interact with staff and students;
4. Create, publicize a merit award system whereby staff can be periodically honored for their accomplishments and outstanding work--not merely for their longevity.
5. Develop a on going forum for staff and students to share projects they have undertaken.

There were other suggestions offered, the gist of which speak to technical methods of enhancing the sense of community at the college. These suggestions are:

1) Employ various methods to bring students who take classes at Voorhees Hall into the college mainstream. For instance

during student elections, establish a voting booth at Voorhees Hall.

2) Place a "suggestion box" in strategic areas of the college.

3) Establish an office of volunteerism wherein students can find out about the opportunities within and outside the college.

4) Develop an "Experts List" of faculty members and their areas of expertise.

5) Have City Tech on Television.

6) Have alumni send in photographs of themselves on their jobs for publication in City Tech newsletters.

7) Sponsor colloborative symposiums with Metrotech corporations.

Finally, there was a consensus among the participants and the members of the subcommittee that the OPEN HEARINGS concept is a valuable tool to building community at City Tech. The hearings allow people to express themselves in a fundamental way. More important, the hearings allowed people to be heard. It is a sense of the subcommittee that we heard the college community. Now, we must demonstrate that their words did not fall upon deaf ears. As one Open Hearing participant put it we must "just do it"--create a sense of family at City Tech.